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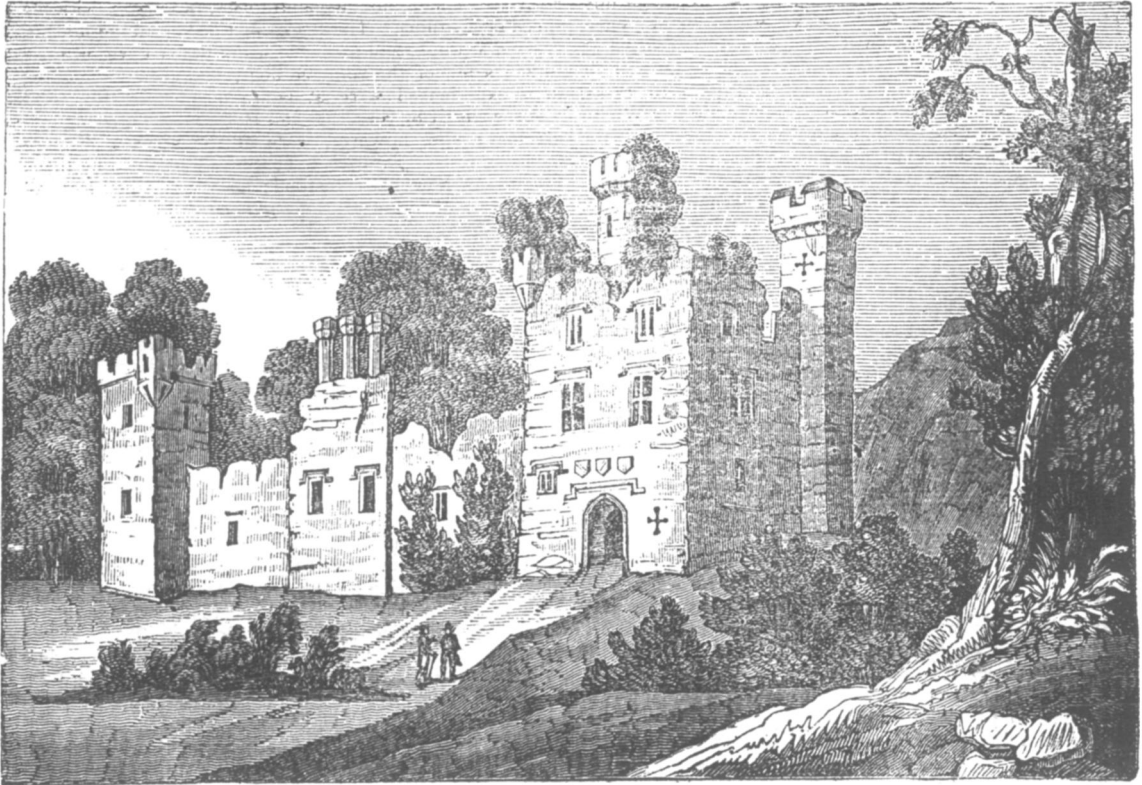
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GARRYOWL CASTLE, COUNTY OF CORK.

RIDES THROUGH THE COUNTY OF CORK.

GARRYOWL CASTLE.

It is an old remark, that to revisit scenes of youth or boyhood, from which we have been many years absent, excites in the minds of all, save the totally heartless and unthinking, recollections and associations which elevate the soul above the passing hour, by the striking lesson they afford of the evanescence of life and its accompaniments.

My reverend companion had turned his horse's head into a wild and trackless district covered with heath and gorse, and we continued to advance among the hills, until we totally lost sight of all traces of human habitation. Lanes and enclosures there were none; and the only marks which could lead one to divine that man had ever been an inmate of the wilderness, was a faint and broken tract, sometimes seen, sometimes lost among the heath, which ran in a perfectly straight line through a portion of the valley, and seemed to denote that the space which it bordered had once been enclosed with a mound and dyke, of which it was now the only relic. Beyond, there was a thick wood of copped oak, intermingled with hazel; and a few old trees of gigantic growth, which the axe had spared, the venerable remnants of a former forest, rose at intervals amidst the dwarf coppice. Although the season was winter, yet the warmth of the air, and the sheltered situation of the solitary vale, tempted forth a few wild bees to anticipate the labours of the spring, and enliven the valley with their busy hum. The scene was calculated to fascinate a romantic imagination, and, I believe, I uttered some expressions commendatory of its total solitude and stillness.

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"It was not always so solitary," said the priest, with an emphasis upon the words; "I remember when I was a boy, that it was a proverb with the people, 'as merry as the vale of Garryowl!'"

"A strange place for merriment or wassail," said I, "unless, like Robin Hood and Little John, the revellers held their orgies on the grass, with the blue vault of heaven for a roof."

"There were some of them who did so, too," replied the priest, with a melancholy smile; "but they are gone—gone! My young friend, it is over thirty years since I stood in this spot, and I find it lamentably changed. I had expected—I knew it was changed; but I had not a conception that the marks of human dwelling were so thoroughly effaced as I find them. I see not a trace of the old castle, beneath whose hospitable roof I have spent some of the happiest hours I was allotted to enjoy."

"The old castle?" echoed I. "What old castle?"

"The old castle of Garryowl," replied the priest. "I thought I showed you a drawing I had made of it many years since—from memory, indeed, but still it was sufficiently accurate, for, I venture to say, that neither it, nor any of the scenes connected with it, can ever be effaced from my recollection."

As he spoke we advanced into the thicket, and following a path which, although greatly tangled, was the only one the place afforded, we soon reached a spot comparatively open, yet encumbered here and there with luxuriant hawthorn bushes and other wild shrubs, which had sprung up from seeds wafted thither from the neighbouring thickets.

"Here stood the castle," said the priest, ascending to

a sort of mound, apparently formed of a mass of fallen walls, over which vegetation, assisted, as he told me, by the hand of man, had spread a coat of verdure. "Those who succeeded poor O'Driscoll here, have worked hard, no doubt, to remove the traces of his hereditary residence. O'Driscoll was a fine young fellow at the time I recollect him, and that was in the year '99. His father was a jovial squire of the old Irish School; more addicted to the pleasures of the table than was good for his health or his finances. He was anxious to emulate the extensive hospitality of the days of Milesian extravagance; and once, when his wife (who was an English woman) expressed an economical wish, that a large supply of home-brewed ale should be transferred from tubs and pails to casks, O'Driscoll exclaimed, in a tone of indignation—'What! put the beer of Garryowl in covered vessels? No—the beer of Fineen Dhu shall never be imprisoned!' Under such a magnanimous system of housekeeping, it was not easy for the *ménage* to thrive. Debts accumulated, and, at length, Fineen Dhu was obliged to confine himself exclusively to the fastnesses of Garryowl, to avoid any awkward collision with creditors; and a strong guerilla force of the clan Driscoll were kept on constant duty in the woods, to espy and prevent any intended intrusion of the servants of the law; of whom none dared for many years to come beyond the Gap of Connella, which we passed coming hither, about two miles off. This necessary state of watchful constraint soured Fineen Dhu's temper; and his wife bore all with exemplary patience—indeed, poor thing, her lot was a pitiable one. Her son, however, was so fortunate as to escape the ill effects of the paternal example, having been trained from his boyhood by a relative residing in Dublin, from whom Fineen Dhu entertained some hopes of a legacy."

"And were you in Garryowl in those riotous times?" asked I.

"I was," replied the priest—"and riotous times you may well call them. Fineen Dhu, in the midst of his distresses, kept a noble pack of hounds, and indulged the neighbouring squires and their visitors with a fox-hunt twice a week, while winter lasted. It was a gay and gallant sight, to behold the red-coats glancing through the woods on a fine frosty morning; the horn ringing loud and clear, and the deep bay of the hounds echoing far through brake and valley; and Fineen, a noble, portly-looking fellow, mounted on a magnificent black hunter as fleet as the wind, surrounded by a sort of body-guard, to protect him from any surprise on the part of the minions of the law. This body-guard had need to be good horsemen to keep up with Fineen Dhu, for he fairly took the wind between his teeth whenever he could. In fact, the poor man's unpleasant circumstances created a restless disposition of mind, which the rapid motion of a fox-hunt contributed in some measure to allay."

"Although the hospitality of those days degenerated too often into extravagance," said I, "yet, at this distance of time, one feels a sort of regret that it has altogether passed away. If it had its evils, it had also its benefits: it generated a frankness of feeling, and a warm kindness of friendship, to which the present generation are strangers. You describe Fineen's fox-hunt in such vivid colours, that I can fancy the whole joyous train sweeping down those hills before my eyes. I hope poor Fineen's rashness never led him into danger?"

"You shall hear. One morning—if my memory fail me not, it was on the 14th of February, 1799, St. Valentine's day—there was a fox-hunt on a splendid scale, in honour of the saint and his festival. I had joined a few saunterers who lingered near the edge of yonder glen to see the gallant train set off. Fineen was seated on his noble steed, and his *body-guard*, as usual, were in attendance, all well mounted. One man was dressed up, according to a whimsical custom of the family, to represent Saint Valentine; and, really, his garb displayed a more accurate acquaintance with antique costume, than one might have expected to find among the riotous inhabitants of Garryowl. The hand of the Lady O'Driscoll was manifest in the high-crowned steeple hat, the long white beard, grotesque mask, and antique cloak of the saint's representative. It is true, that in the hat there was some-

thing puritanic and Cromwellian, which did not quite harmonise with our notions of Saint Valentine; however, we were not very critical; and the whole attire looked outlandish and ancient enough, especially when contrasted with the three-cocked hats and gold lace that adorned the heads of the fox-hunting party. The dogs bayed joyously, the horns rang, the men hallooed, the valleys re-echoed the spirit-stirring uproar; a fox was almost immediately unearthed from his den on the side of yonder furzy glen, and away swept men, hounds, and horses, in pursuit, with the speed of lightning. The fox at first distanced the hounds, crossed a brook, and ascended a hill under cover of some furze; a few of the younger dogs, and even some of the more experienced were at fault; meanwhile, the scent was recovered by Sweetlips and Harmony, two of the oldest dogs; who, however, were at too great a distance from the rest of the pack to be speedily rejoined by them. Fineen saw how matters stood; he was divided from all his party, save a few of the *body-guard*, by a wood; and valuing the acquisition of the *maquis* above all other earthly honours, he could not resist the temptation so strongly presented of following Sweetlips and Harmony, and, perhaps being in at the death before even the huntsman should be half-way up the hill. He therefore touched his steed with the spur, and the fleet and noble animal flew forward, accompanied for a very few moments by the mounted body-guard, who were not, however, able to keep pace with their master in ascending the hill. Fineen reached the summit in a very few minutes, Sweetlips and Harmony in full cry at Reynard's heels. The fox made directly for an earth about a quarter of a mile further on, in the midst of a thicket; but here his retreat had been intercepted with cruel ingenuity, for the lad who had been appointed on the night before to stop this earth, had left the mouth of it open, so as to induce the fox to enter, while the obstruction he had raised at a distance of two or three feet from the entrance, effectually excluded poor Reynard from the penetration of his den. The momentary delay occasioned to Reynard was sufficient to enable Sweetlips and Harmony to come up with him ere he could resume his flight; the death struggle commenced; Reynard made a gallant defence, but in vain; Sweetlips and Harmony ended his struggles, and Fineen Dhu descended to secure the brush; when, on looking up, he beheld St. Valentine's representative at his side, just issuing from the thicket. Somewhat surprised, if not a little startled, at this unexpected apparition, he exclaimed, that he thought St. Valentine had been with the body of the hunters in the glen. The man said nothing, but looked around, as if expecting the appearance of some other person.

"Who are you looking for, Jack?" cried Fineen with a feeling of suspicion, which induced him to spring on the back of his hunter.

The man seized the bridle; Fineen plied the butt of his silver mounted horsewhip on his face; the mask came off in the scuffle, and, lo! the face which appeared was not that of the person whom Lady O'Driscoll had dressed up that morning in St. Valentine's fantastic garb. All this passed with the rapidity of light, and left not an instant for Fineen to form a conjecture on the subject. It was evidently the result of a preconcerted plan of seizure; although its denouement at that particular spot was probably accidental; for ere Fineen could look a second time around him, two horsemen rode from behind the thicket armed with pistols, one of whom came up and collared Fineen, who bitterly repented his rashness in outstripping his *body-guard*, and who felt that resistance would be wholly unavailing. But while he parleyed with his legal captors, a tall, handsome youth, who suddenly appeared on the field, galloped up with all possible speed to the scene of action.

"Heaven bless ye, Florence! heaven bless ye, my son!" cried poor Fineen, in accents of the utmost agony, "you are just come in time to save your father!"

"Where are your pistols, father?" were the first words of young Florence, astonished at seeing his father unarmed; and at the same time drawing one of formidable length from his holster case.

Ere Fineen could reply, the redoubtable *body-guard* came up, and a very brisk struggle commenced; for the

engines of the law had been offered an immense reward for the seizure of Fineen, and it was evident from the pertinacity with which they contested the field that they expected speedy re-inforcement. And in this respect their hopes were realized; for three well-armed riders soon joined them from a different quarter."

"And how did the scuffle terminate?"

"Fatally, alas! for poor Fineen Dhu. He was shot through the head; but he did not die unavenged; for two of his assailants were killed on the spot, and one was dangerously wounded. The body was conveyed to the castle, where the revellings were changed into deep and solemn mourning. A report arose, that the creditors would watch the funeral with a military force to seize upon the body. There were several armed men at the funeral in consequence of this report, but no such attempt was made."

"And what became of the pseudo St. Valentine?"

"No one ever knew—*Abiit—evasit—erupit*."

"Did young Florence inherit the misfortunes of his sire?"

"Indeed he did; the poor fellow had no other inheritance. He was illegitimate in the eye of the law; for his mother, who was a Protestant, had only been united to his father by a Catholic priest; and although his parents, of course, incurred no moral guilt, yet their improvidence in this respect seemed to threaten him with the loss of his inheritance. He marshalled his troops, and announced his intention of retaining his possessions, if necessary, by the strong arm; in which project he received strong profers of assistance from one or two neighbouring gentlemen. In the mean time his property was claimed by a family named Davidson, the nearest of *legitimate* kin to his father, as the law interpreted legitimacy. They were English, and their zeal for the ejection of Florence from his hereditary home, was heightened by a very strong political prejudice. Florence, although thus surrounded with difficulty, was not wholly without hope, for he was not destitute of interest. While in Dublin, he had formed a friendship with Foster, the Speaker of the House of Commons, who, although his mind was tinctured with what would now be called high Tory principles, had a truly benevolent heart, and was a staunch friend to Irish independence. A better Irishman than Foster seldom has lived. To Foster, then, poor Florence wrote, detailing the attack threatened by the Davidson's upon his patrimony; and also stating the munificent offer of a mercantile relative to pay off the incumbrances entailed upon the property by Fineen Dhu's extravagance, provided that it could be secured in the possession of his son. Foster could devise no mode of effectually baffling the Davidsons, except by procuring a special act of parliament to legitimize Florence O'Driscoll. But the Davidsons were wealthy, and had friends in the House, so that it did not seem positively certain that the Speaker's interest could effect the legitimization. In the mean time, he bade his young friend be of good cheer, and told him he had other views for his advancement, which would possibly make amends for the loss of his paternal inheritance, supposing such a thing unavoidable. Florence had been trained up a Protestant by his Dublin relatives, who professed that persuasion, and he, of course, was eligible to the House of Commons. Foster's plan for his advancement was a very brilliant one: for it contemplated a seat in the House, and a lucrative post in the Customs. Well do I remember the morning that young Florence quitted, for the last time, his paternal abode! Each object in the well-known scene, each angle and feature of the ancient castle, assumed a marked and painful prominence, as if forcing itself on the notice of one who was destined no more to behold it! There were three shields over the door, surmounted with a label moulding—you may see them in my sketch—the central one bore the arms of O'Driscoll, and the two others presented the bearings of O'Sullivan and O'Neill. Poor Florence, who had been educated in high notions of his ancient descent, turned round to behold these insignia of his far-descended house; the thought which they suggested was bitter; a tear glistened in his eye; he brushed it away, but spoke not. I accompanied him to Dublin; and although so many years have since

passed away, I cannot refrain from expressing the unfading gratitude I feel for Mr. Foster's kindness to myself. He repeatedly asked me to his hospitable mansion in Molesworth-street, where I often was present at the political meetings held there by the friends of Ireland. I remember that the night of our arrival, Mr. Foster greeted Florence in these words:

"I shall get you into Parliament, my good friend, and keep you there as long as it lasts; but *how long* our rulers may leave you a Parliament to stay in, is quite another affair. However, we will keep it as long as we can, and trust to Providence for the rest."

"The political meetings at the Speaker's house were usually held in a wainscotted back parlour, hung round with portraits of the Foster family. There was a small half-length of Lady Massarene, and a splendid full length likeness of the Speaker himself, in his parliamentary robes. I am minute in these trifling details, because the scenes, the events of that period, both public and private, are indelibly impressed upon my memory."

"Meanwhile, the Davidsons pushed their legal claims, and succeeded in defeating Florence, as Mr. Foster's interest failed in procuring the act of legitimization in sufficient time to secure to him the possession of his patrimony. Mr. Davidson who was a hot-headed, prejudiced, and, withal, an eccentric man, commenced operations by throwing down Garryowl Castle, and demolishing every vestige of the edifice, in the sage hope that he might thereby obliterate all traces of the former family. Davidson's purpose was, I understand, to erect a modern mansion with the materials of the castle, but he soon relinquished this design, not relishing the necessity to which a neighbouring gentleman assured him he would be subjected, of always moving about with an armed escort to protect himself from the vengeance of the natives. The care of the property was then committed to some fear-nought bailiff, to whom bloody encounters and hair-breadth 'scapes were as familiar and indifferent as possible."

"Florence's fortunes were not destined to survive those of his country. He remained in parliament, to use the words of Mr. Foster, while parliament remained. I drove with him and Mr. Foster to the House in the Speaker's carriage, on the night the Union passed the House of Commons."

While the priest spoke, I hung intensely on his words, just as if the important decision he recorded were yet pending. He perceived and understood my feelings."

"I proceeded to the gallery, and beheld the closing scene. When the division was announced, Mr. Ball, the member for Drogheda, rose, and casting his eyes upwards with an expression of agonised despair, quitted the house, followed by all the members who did not wish to be witnesses of the scene which was now to follow. The Speaker rose, and seemed about to put the question; but his fortitude failed him for a moment, and he sank back into his chair, his countenance strongly indicative of his mental torture. After a momentary silence he rose again, and, in low and faltering accents, put the question, 'That this bill do pass.' A faint, tremulous 'Aye' was returned from the benches. He then, in the established parliamentary form, called for the 'Noes.' But, alas! the 'Noes,' conscious of their fatal minority, had quitted the house, that they might not be witnesses of their own extinction. How the Speaker supported the scene, I cannot conceive. His voice was almost inaudible in pronouncing the words of doom, 'The ayes have it.' He rushed from his seat, rejoined Florence O'Driscoll in the lobby, and hurried home in silence to Molesworth-street. Florence lost his post in the customs; and quitting Ireland in disgust, entered the Austrian service, and fell in some continental skirmish."

#### ON DISEASES OF THE LUNGS.

The following interesting observations on a subject in which many individuals are deeply concerned, are taken from a Lecture on Clinical Instruction, by Philip Cramp-ton, Surgeon General to the Forces in Ireland:—

"Let me illustrate the nature and uses of clinical observation by an example.—There are two cases in hospital,